

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 187350

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ORIGIN INR-07

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APPROVED BY INR/DDR:MPACKMAN

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INR/PMT:RBARAZ (DRAFT)

INR/RSE:IMATUSEK (DRAFT)

PM:JWKIMBALL (DRAFT)

S/P:RBFINN (DRAFT)

EA:RHMILLER (DRAFT)

EUR/SOV:BMZOOK (DRAFT)

C:JMONTGOMERY (DRAFT)

S/S:MR SEBASTIAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: XB, XP, UR, MPOL

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF ASIAN/PACIFIC REGION PERCEPTIONS OF
THE SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE PACIFIC (NIAM 40/11-1-
76)

1. THE WASHINGTON INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY HAS BEEN TASKED
TO PREPARE AN ANALYTICAL MEMORANDUM ON PERCEPTIONS IN THE
ASIAN/PACIFIC REGION OF THE SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN
THE PACIFIC.

2. THIS CENTRAL QUESTION WILL BE VIEWED IN THE BROADER
CONTEXT OF THE OVERALL ROLE OF THE USSR IN THE AREA AND
REGIONAL REACTIONS THERETO. THE FOCAL POINT OF THE

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SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 187350

ANALYSIS, HOWEVER, WILL BE THE DEGREE TO WHICH THIS SLOWLY

GROWING PRESENCE HAS BEEN OBSERVED AND IS ALTERING OR AFFECTING VIEWS ON WIDER SECURITY POLITICAL ISSUES.

3. AGAINST THE BROADER BACKGROUND, THE QUESTIONS THE MEMORANDUM WILL ADDRESS CONCERNING KOREA INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

A. TO WHAT DEGREE ARE THE SOUTH KOREANS AWARE OF SOVIET NAVAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PACIFIC OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS OR SO? IN WHAT SECTORS--GOVERNMENT, POLITICAL, MILITARY, PRESS, GENERAL PUBLIC, ETC.--DOES THIS AWARENESS EXIST? HAS THIS AWARENESS RESULTED IN ANY CHANGE OF PLANS FOR SOUTH KOREAN INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION ACTIVITIES OR AIR AND SEA DEFENSE CAPABILITIES?

B. HAVE PERCEPTIONS OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTED OR CHANGED SOUTH KOREAN OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL ATTITUDES TOWARD, CONCERNS ABOUT, OR PERCEPTIONS OF

--THE SOVIET UNION ITSELF, AND MOSCOW'S ROLE AS AN ALLY OF NORTH KOREA;

--THE BALANCE OF POWER IN THE AREA, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE NAVAL BALANCE IN THE WATERS AROUND THE KOREAN PENINSULA;

--THE DESIRABLE COURSE OF SEOUL'S RELATIONS WITH THE MAJOR POWERS IN THE REGION (TO INCLUDE THE U.S., CHINA, THE SOVIET UNION, AND JAPAN);

--NATIONAL VULNERABILITIES;

--THE ROLE JAPAN SHOULD PLAY IN THE REGION.

4. MISSION COMMENTS ON ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS WOULD BE APPRECIATED BY AUGUST 19.

5. FYI. WE VIEW THE SOVIET PACIFIC OCEAN FLEET AS PRIMARILY STRUCTURED TO COUNTER NAVAL FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, OF CHINA AND JAPAN.

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SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 187350

IT HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY UPGRADED IN QUALITY IN THE PAST 2 YEARS WITH THE ADDITION OF GUIDED MISSILE CRUISERS, GUIDED MISSILE DESTROYERS, NEW LANDING SHIPS, AND MODERN NUCLEAR POWERED ATTACK AND BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINES. BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINES ROUTINELY PATROL IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC. MOST SURFACE SHIP OPERATIONS IN THE PACIFIC AREA OCCUR IN LOCAL WATERS, I.E., IN THE SEAS OF JAPAN AND OKHOTSK; THERE IS SOME SURFACE AND SUBMARINE

ACTIVITY IN THE PHILIPPINE SEA; INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION AND RESEARCH SHIPS MAINTAIN AN ALMOST CONTINUOUS PRESENCE IN MICRONESIAN WATERS. SOVIET NAVAL AVIATION AIRCRAFT FREQUENTLY CONDUCT FLIGHTS INTO THE PACIFIC TO RECONNOITER U.S. NAVAL FORCES, OCCASIONALLY AS FAR SOUTH AS GUAM. SINCE 1968, THE PACIFIC FLEET HAS DEPLOYED A SQUADRON TO THE INDIAN OCEAN, WHERE APPROXIMATELY 15-20 SHIPS (7-8 COMBATANTS) ARE MAINTAINED VIA TRANSITS THROUGH SUCH STRAITS AS TSUSHIMA AND MALACCA. IN GENERAL THE OVERALL CAPABILITIES OF SOVIET NAVAL FORCES IN THE PACIFIC ARE INCREASING SLOWLY BY STEADILY. AMPHIBIOUS CAPABILITIES REMAIN LIMITED, AND THE SOVIETS COULD NOT NOW MOUNT OR SUSTAIN A MAJOR ASSAULT AGAINST WELL-DEFENDED LAND TARGETS.

6. YOU ARE TO KEEP ASSESSMENT EFFORTS STRICTLY WITHIN CONFINES OF U.S. MISSION AND IN-HOUSE USG ELEMENTS AND SPECIFICALLY ARE NOT TO CONSULT OR APPROACH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OR NATIONALS IN THIS REGARD. DEPARTMENT IS CONCERNED THAT IF INFORMATION THAT SUCH U.S. INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT IS UNDERWAY BECOMES FOREIGN KNOWLEDGE, HOST GOVERNMENT COULD MISTAKE OR MISINTERPRET SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPLICATIONS, DRAWING UNWARRANTED AND MISLEADING CONCLUSIONS HARMFUL TO U.S. INTERESTS. WHILE WE WANT THE FRESHEST POSSIBLE THINKING, YOU ARE URGED TO BE AS OBJECTIVE AS POSSIBLE. THE QUESTIONS SHOULD NOT BE VIEWED AS DESIGNED TO PROVE ANY PARTICULAR THESIS OR TO FORESHADOW ANY CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY OR IN DEPLOYMENTS.

7. SEPARATE INSTRUCTIONS BEING CABLED TO SOUTHEAST ASIAN EMBASSIES AND TOKYO. KISSINGER

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